

**What is Claimed is:**

1           1.     An incoming mail monitoring system, said system comprises:  
2                     one or more data bases that stores unique information affixed to  
3 mail and identities of mailers ;  
4                     a plurality of receptacles that reads and stores the unique  
5 information affixed to mail after the mail enters the interior of the receptacle;  
6                     a data center that stores the unique information affixed to mail and  
7 receives the unique information from the receptacles to determine if the mailer is  
8 permitted to enter mail in the receptacle; and  
9                     means coupled to the data center and the recipient of the mail for  
10 communicating to the recipient, information stored in the data center about the  
11 mail.

1           2.     The system claimed in claim 1, wherein the means comprises:  
2                     a telephone; and  
3                     a voice response unit that is coupled to the telephone and the data  
4 center.

1           3.     The system claimed in claim 1, wherein the means comprises:  
2                     a computer coupled to the data center via the Internet.

1           4.     The system claimed in claim 1, wherein the recipient transmits  
2 recipient and mailer name and address information appearing on the mail to the  
3 data center.

1           5.     The system claimed in claim 1, wherein the recipient transmits  
2 coded information appearing on the mail to the data center.

1           6.     The system claimed in claim 1, wherein the receptacle units include  
2 a scanner that reads the mail.

1           7.     The system claimed in claim 6, wherein the scanner is located in a  
2 control chamber.

1           8.     The system claimed in claim 7, wherein the control chamber has a  
2 locked door for isolating suspect mail.

1           9.     The system claimed in claim 7, wherein the interior of the  
2 receptacle comprises:

3                   an inner chamber that receives mail from the control chamber that  
4                   is not suspected of having life- harming material.

1           10.    The system claimed in claim 9, wherein the inner chamber has a  
2 locked door in which when open mail may be removed from the inner chamber.

1           11.    The system claimed in claim 7, further including a slot for  
2    depositing mail into the control chamber.

1           12.    The system claimed in claim 11, further including means for closing  
2    the slot when the mail in the control chamber is suspected of containing life  
3    harming substances.

1           13.    The system claimed in claim 12, further comprising means for  
2    indicating a message indicating the status of the receptacle.

1           14.    The system claimed in claim 1, wherein the receptacles includes the  
2    time and date that the mail was deposited in the receptacle.

1           15.    The system claimed in claim 14, wherein the receptacles, includes  
2    the location of the receptacle.

1           16.    The system claimed in claim 1, wherein the receptacle unit  
2    includes: means for informing the post of possibility of the presence of life  
3    harming material in the mail.